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## For Spot Cash

By Martha McCulloch-Williams

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**A** WOMAN sighs, "I wish a man should say, 'I will.'" Norris read from an old commonplace book, adding, with a little laugh: "Lord, how this generation discounts that fine piece of Delver's sentimentality! Women nowadays have got past sighing anything. Instead they say things, and, behold, the things are done."

"Which means, if anything, that you're dead sore," Marvin retorted, pulling hard at his pipe. "I don't wonder at it," he went on. "You were so immorally certain Baby Curran would make ducks and drakes of her venture, when, lo, she's succeeded in a way to astonish everybody."

"Wrong, as usual," Norris commented. Marvin shook his head, with a lazy laugh, saying: "George, but I'm glad Daddy Curran left nothing but debts and a livery stable to his flock of children. There was nothing for Baby to do except keep on with the business."

"There was. She might have married me," Norris interrupted. "She knew I'd look out for her stepmother and the kids."

"No doubt," Marvin broke in, "but that isn't Baby's way. Don't you remember how at school she wouldn't be told in class or have her sums done for her? Honest independence is her ruling passion—so much so, indeed, I feared to have her go into this. Daddy Curran never thought of doubting anybody's word until he had to. I thought Baby was off the same piece. So she is, but she's got something else in her. Her spot cash conscience, she calls it. I heard her explaining to old Major Astum that the way to avoid bad debts was to have no debts at all and let the bank do all the bookkeeping."

Norris drummed hard on the table. "I'm a fool to keep on eargin," he burst out. "She puts me aside like a last year's bonnet; won't hear of marrying me until the debts are paid and Benny boy through school and ready to step into her shoes. That means four years at least. Meantime there's the devil to pay with my people. They're not purse proud, but who can blame them if they don't want to welcome us a slaughter a headstrong young woman who has made herself the talk of the county, not even though she did it with the best intentions in the world? My mother was at me yesterday, asking me if I wanted a wife who had grown sharp at bargaining with half the horse dealers and teamsters in the countryside. It seems Baby is setting up to buy saddle stock."

"I don't know anybody with a better right. She knows horses better than the most of us," Marvin interposed. "And, all things considered, it is a good thing. She has her market ready made, as it were. Those city folks take everything of class she can find them and pay her a handsome profit."

"You seem to hold a brief for her," Norris said sulkily, a gleam of suspicion in his eyes. "It might be well for you to join hands with her. You might make more at horse dealing than you ever did at the law."

"Very likely—if I had Baby's chance. But certainly I shan't scheme to take it from her," Marvin said steadily; then, flushing a little, he added: "I would be only too glad to join hands with her in anything—and for life. But she has let me know that's out of the question. When she set you free she left herself bound, little as you deserve it."

"The last word was flung over his shoulder. He had risen and was striding toward the door. Norris looked after him, half angrily, half shamedly, then glanced about the handsomely appointed office with a scowling sneer. His grandfather had been governor, his father was a senator, his mother led society in Allingham. Naturally she looked high for her only son, much higher than a bankrupt's daughter, who had taken upon her shoulders an unwomanly burden. Still she had not set herself openly against her son's choice. She had even approved, though mildly, his intention of constancy. How, then, should he suspect that she was planning to upset that intention? The hinge of the plan was Miss Althea Roswell—a beauty, Miss Althea Roswell—had she overlooked her nose. Unfortunately it stood out so boldly over-looking it was impossible, even in the

effulgence of her many dollars. It was the nose as much as anything else that had made Granville Norris feel so much at ease with her. She had come for a long visit, and Allingham was looking much of her, yet somehow she had not been brought face to face with Baby, who had nowadays little time and less money for ruffling it in the town gayeties. Norris himself saw her but in little snatches. She went and came so uncertainly and at such odd times he could not waylay her and calls were out of the question. The little new home was so crowded it was impossible to say anything there without having it reach all ears. Norris felt that there was much which ought to be said, but somehow had not yet brought himself to the pitch of saying it.

He glanced out of the window, his eyes brightening as they fell upon his mother, driving her pony chaise, with Althea snug beside her. He rushed out to greet them and almost dragged them inside. Very shortly thereafter he went away with them—upon an errand he did not in the least relish. Miss Althea had heard of Baby Curran's venture; further, she had lost her heart to a fine saddle mare Baby had just bought and sent out to exercise. She meant to have the creature at almost any price, so Norris, perforce, went along to see the bargaining. He did not go quite blithely. Though he had never let himself acknowledge it, he was not insensible to what he would gain if he could bring himself to marry Miss Roswell. If he meant ever to do that, it was well not to set the new fancy beside the old. He writhed at the thought, hoping against hope for some inconspicuous chance to take Baby away. But, most inconsistently, he felt a flooding gladness at sight of her, snalling a welcome from the door of the neat dingy office.

She was sorry, dreadfully sorry, but Black Lecky was not to be bought. She had been bought, indeed, upon a special order from the city stable and would be sent there as soon as ever she got a little wanted to the bustle of streets. Yes, she had got a fine commission. No, Miss Roswell could not have the mare by doubling, trebling, quadrupling it—not for anything at all. She (Baby) was sorry to seem dis-obliging, but she could do nothing else. She had given her word and must keep it; had promised the dealer the best horse to be found and, having found one without a match, was bound to let him have it.

Miss Roswell had been silken soft at the outset. Finding herself thus "withstood for the sake of what seemed to her a fine spun scruple, she showed a temper as high as her nose and flounced across the stall front, saying to Mrs. Norris in pretended aside: "Isn't it lucky? I didn't really want the mare—only to see what a woman horse jockey is like. She's not bad looking either. You might take her to be quite respectable—unless you knew better."

Baby heard every word, as Miss Roswell meant she should. She stepped back a pace, going white, then red, her hands hanging helplessly at her sides. Norris likewise heard; he flushed darkly and made as if to stand by his sweetheart. But his mother was calling him, likewise his duty as a courteous host. With a look half angry, half apologetic, he followed the two retreating figures toward their carriage. Halfway to it he stopped and half turned about, to see Marvin standing with Baby's hand in his, her face raised to his and her eyes wet. Instantly he flung back to them, but Baby waved him away. When he had gone and the carriage was out of hearing, she said to Marvin, with a little hard breath: "Poor Granville! I ought not to blame him. He has maybe caught my faith in spot cash."

Then, most unaccountably, she hid her face in her hands and sobbed hard a minute, but looked up after it, smiling a brave yet piteous smile. Marvin took her hand again and pressed it ever so little, saying in a half whisper: "Honey, cry all you want to between now and the New Year. We are going to get married then and live happy ever after."

Baby's answer was a blush and silence, but the wedding came off duly, a month ahead of the Norris-Roswell affair.

### One Breadwinner Enough.

"Rastus, you old scoundrel, didn't your wife tell you that I wanted some cord wood cut this afternoon?"

"Scuse me, jedge, but didn't my missus git yo'r family wash ter do dis very mawnin'?"

"Yes."

"Well, undah dem circumstances, jedge, mah wife am a woman ob mo' sains 'n ter fetch mo' enny sech message jes' at dis time."—Judge.

## New Crisp Spring Dry Goods! In Full Blast Here.

Some people say "these are hard times." Suppose they are. "Hard times" are the best times in the world to offer a woman a little more than her money's worth; and they are the best times in the world for us to prove that we are giving a little more than your money's worth. We have a big stock for you to select from—bought since the fall in prices—bought for CASH at the lowest cash price, therefore we are prepared to offer you

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My prices are all Special: "One Price TO ALL."

You will find me in West End, where I have done business for EIGHTEEN YEARS.

## A. K. PARK,

West End.

Greenville.

S. C.

## Norris Bargain House.

### To the Readers of The Sentinel-Journal

The merchants of Pickens can boycott their own town paper if they wish, but—right here we wish to say to the trading public that the NORRIS BARGAIN HOUSE, at Norris, S. C., buys goods to sell and not to lie on the shelves of the store.

No old goods on hand.

Prices move goods.

Low Prices, Honest Weights and Fair Dealing is our Motto.

Ballard's Obelisk Flour at \$5.35 per barrel.

Two boxes of Shells for 75c.

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Satisfaction guaranteed or money back if you want it.

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Near Norris depot.

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## I. D. RICE,

Proprietor Norris Bargain House,

NORRIS, SOUTH CAROLINA.